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Midwinter Birds on the Mojave Desert

BY JOSEPH MAILLIARD AND JOSEPH GRINNELL

(Concluded from page 77)

Vireo huttoni. Hutton Vireo. A single specimen was secured by Taylor on December 28. This was doubtless a winter visitant from the San Diegan district to the southwards.

Helminthophila celata. Orange-crowned Warbler. Two examples, ♂ and ♀, were taken by Mailliard on Dec. 22 and 29, respectively. (Nos. 6109 and 6234, Coll. J. & J. W. M.) Apparently similar birds were seen by the other members of the party. This would seem to show that the orange-crowned warbler is something more than a mere straggler. This eastern race may prove to be a regular winter visitant in southeastern California.

Dendroica auduboni. Audubon Warbler. Fairly common in the river bottom.

Geothlypis trichas occidentalis. Western Yellow-throat. A male specimen (No. 6256, Coll. J. & J. W. M.), collected Dec. 31 from a tule patch near the river, seems best referable to *occidentalis* on account of large size and less brownish shading laterally and dorsally. But one other yellow-throat was seen.

Anthus pensylvanicus. American Pipit. Numerous in flocks on the pasture lands along the river.

Oroscoptes montanus. Sage Thrasher. Unexpectedly rare. But one was discovered. This was shot from a cottonwood near the station by Mailliard.

Mimus polyglottos leucopterus. Western Mockingbird. A very few were found in the river bottom.

Toxostoma lecontei. Leconte Thrasher. Scarce and only noted back from the river on the sandy reaches of the desert. But one specimen was secured.

Heleodytes brunneicapillus couesi. Cactus Wren. A few cactus wrens were met with among the tree yuccas on the desert two miles west of Victorville.

Salpinctes obsoletus. Rock Wren. Common almost everywhere except among the cottonwoods.

Thryomanes bewicki drymœcus. San Joaquin Wren. Common in the river bottom. All of nine specimens secured seem to be representative of the race breeding in the San Joaquin-Sacramento Valley, as described by Oberholser (Proc. N. S. N. M. XXI, 1898, 437). As regards intensity of dorsal rufescence, they are about intermediate between *charienturus* and *spilurus*. This form is doubtless here a winter visitant from the northwestward. A specimen of the same subspecies has been previously recorded from Barstow in midwinter. (Grinnell, CONDOR III, May 1901, 70.)

Troglodytes aedon aztecus. Western House Wren. A ♂ (No. 6216, Coll. J. & J. W. M.) taken by Mailliard Dec. 28, and the only one of the species detected by any of the party, is remarkably different from *parkmani* in its drab-gray caste of coloration. In fact there is scarcely a tinge of refuscent, even on the rump. This individual was probably a visitant from the Great Basin region to the northward.

Telmatodytes palustris plesius. Western Marsh Wren. Fairly common about the alfalfa patch previously mentioned. All of the six skins secured by the party show the large size and pale coloration of the Great Basin race, *plesius*.

Certhia americana montana. Rocky Mountain Creeper. Fairly common in the cottonwoods along the river. The three skins taken all have the large measurements, broad dorsal white streaking, and pale browns characteristic of the

Rocky Mountain form. They are readily distinguishable from *zelotes*, the breeding bird of the Sierras. *Montana* is probably a winter visitant, therefore, to southeastern California from the northeastward.

Sitta carolinensis aculeata. Slender-billed Nuthatch. Fairly common among the cottonwoods.

Parus gambeli. Mountain Chickadee. Common in the brush and cottonwoods of the river bottom.

Psaltriparus minimus. California Bush-Tit. Fairly common along the river. The specimens secured are quite like those of the southern coast district of California, and these in turn do not present tangible differences from Oregon skins of the same season.

Auriparus flaviceps. Verdin. One specimen, secured by Dixon, was the only one met with. We found no mesquites in the vicinity of Victorville, and this evidently accounts for the absence of verdins. For farther down the Mojave River, at Barstow, both mesquites and verdins are plentiful.

Regulus calendula cineraceus. Ashy Kinglet. Fairly common, mostly along the wooded bottom lands. But several were met with among "sage" bushes out on the desert. All the skins secured show large size, and grayness of coloration conspicuous anteriorly. (See CONDOR VI, Jan. 1904, 25.)

Myadestes townsendi. Townsend Solitaire. Solitaires were fairly numerous among the cottonwoods, where they were feeding on mistletoe berries.

Hylocichla guttata nana. Dwarf Hermit Thrush. One specimen was taken by Pinger near the river.

Merula migratoria propinqua. Western Robin. Fairly common among the cottonwoods, where they were feeding on the mistletoe berries.

Sialia mexicana occidentalis. Western Bluebird. Abundant along the river bottom where they were feeding largely on mistletoe berries.

Sialia arctica. Mountain Bluebird. Two flocks were encountered out on the desert quite a distance from the river.

The Sage Grouse, *Centrocercus urophasianus*

BY L. E. BURNETT^a

EDITED BY S. ARTHUR JOHNSON

I HAVE had the pleasure of giving the sage grouse considerable attention, for, owing to my residence where the species is very numerous, I have been enabled to observe the birds at all times of the year. It is worth a long trip to see the male in full plumage at mating season. His striking dress and yellow air-

^aThe author of this sketch was born in Luray, Missouri. His family moved to Colorado when he was a mere lad and settled near Loveland. After a residence there of several years they took up life on a ranch not far from Little Medicine, Wyoming, which was his home until his death. From early childhood Mr. Burnett was a passionate lover of animal life. He was much in the field and sought many times to tame his wild friends. One fall he had seven young antelope in captivity, but the experiment proved a failure owing to lack of proper diet.

Life in Wyoming gave him ample opportunity for observation and, by familiarizing himself with the best literature, he became imbued with the scientific spirit. In order that he might collect and preserve, he learned the art of taxidermy and attained usual proficiency in that line. He strove always for expression in his work, and secured results through his large knowledge of wild life.

The greater part of the first two years of his life was spent in collecting and mounting material for the museum of the Colorado Agricultural College. It was while living here that a severe attack of his lifelong enemy, asthma, took him from us. From boyhood he struggled with a body weakened by chronic pulmonary troubles. His ambition and love of his work often led him beyond the limits of his strength. His cheerful disposition and kindly attitude endeared him to all with whom he came in contact. Following plans laid by himself, his valuable private collection was presented to the public library of Fort Collins, Colorado.—S. A. J.